

UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

Prentice Computer Centre

NEWSLETTER

authorization: Director of the Centre

1 SYSTEM AVAILABILITY

The growth in demand for computer services has placed a tremendous strain on our available resources. One impact is that sufficient computer time has not been available for general maintenance of our operating system software. Our systems programmers make use of time at weekends and early mornings but there are limits to the amount that can be achieved during these times.

System reliability and consequently our users confidence in our system is our first priority. There are obvious limits to improvements possible in the level of service but we feel that the recent level of reliability is not up to the standard we would like to achieve. There are a number of known errors in the operating system which should be fixed.

To enable this work to be given special emphasis, it has been decided that, as from 27 October 1975, the system will on occasions be dedicated to System Software use between 1800 hours to 2000 hours and will therefore not be available to users. Several hours notice will be given on each day when this occurs.

We apologise for any inconvenience that may be caused to users but we feel it is in the overall best interest of all. Our grim past experience has been that if we don't take special action in a situation of instability of the system, then the problems snowball.

A further problem associated with recent system reliability has been a transient problem in the disk system. Such errors are most troublesome as the recovery procedure to refresh the public disk storage area from backup is a lengthy procedure. The cause of the fault is also very difficult to locate as the error incidence is not high and usually such faults cannot be located even with lengthy running of engineering diagnostic programs. Present evidence points to a problem with an individual disk drive and this drive has been replaced with a spare.

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